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ABSTRACT

This case study examines the teaching practices of Alan Woods, (pseudonym) who teaches elementary students in an outdoor education program. It describes a typical teaching day, including Alan's comments about his work and important aspects of being an outdoor educator. Alan stated that he used recitation questioning (asking students to recite previously learned information) to get to know his students and keep their attention and that he used Socratic questioning (a series of simple questions leading to formation of a concept) when students were keen to the topic. In observed practice, however, with activities tightly scheduled, Alan used extensive recitation questioning only. This difference between what Alan said and what he actually did can be explained by a contrast between espoused theories and theories-in-use. Espoused theories are what we give our allegiance to; whereas theories-in-use actually govern our behavior. Alan faced the conflict of balancing his responsibility to get to know his students with his professional obligation to teach lessons prescribed by the school program policy. A second conflict in Alan's practice was between concerns of cognitive outcomes of his teaching and affective ones. These conflicts reflect two opposing views of outdoor education. The "indoor view" holds that outdoor education, like all other types of schooling, should not stress the affective, emotional and social outcomes of learning. Alan in practice, however, accepts what might be called an outdoor view. This view says that outdoor education is not like other school subjects, that it provides experiences with special attributes and demands of their own. The conflict between an outdoor educator's thoughts and actions is a problem to which the solution lies in the explication and understanding of the indoor/outdoor dilemma. (LP)

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INSIDE OUTDOOR EDUCATION: A CASE STUDY

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Introduction

Although students are often taken outside to teach them about themselves and about the world, the nature of the outdoor context is not well described in educational literature. There are thousands of outdoor education facilities across North America, but there is little systematic understanding of the actual practice of outdoor educators.

The existing research literature provides little insight into exactly what outdoor teachers do. Studies like those reviewed by Van der Smissen (1980) produced activity manuals and descriptions of outdoor programs but provide no information about outdoor teaching practice. Some studies (Holt, 1973, and Christensen & Johnson, 1977) surveyed the views of outdoor teachers and produced long lists of outdoor teacher competencies based on what teachers said they did. The use of questionnaires—instead of observations to investigate teaching practice—limits the value of these findings, because we have no way of knowing whether what outdoor teachers describe as important is, in actuality, a controlling feature in their outdoor teaching practice.

With the desire to examine the outdoor teaching context, specifically the practice of outdoor teachers, I undertook an ethnographic study that involved observing and interviewing two outdoor educators over an eight-month period. Interview transcripts, observation notes, sketch maps of favourite teaching locations, written evaluations of student teachers, lesson plans, school documents and repertory grid data were combined in the study to produce portraits of outdoor teaching life. This paper details the outdoor teaching of Alan Woods (pseudonym), one of the two informants. It intends to give a detailed look at the issues and conflicts that might be used by other outdoor educators as a basis of reflection on their own practice.

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[1] This Outdoor and Experiential Education Unit Occasional Paper is an expanded version of "Dilemma in Outdoor Education" *Outdoor Recreation Research Journal* Volume 1, Winter 1986, pp 31-40.

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The paper is broken into four main sections. First, a typical day is described. This is followed by Alan's comments about his work, subdivided again into four categories: "Getting Psyched," "Their Best Possible Day," "Getting to Know Kids," and "The Importance of Flexibility." Then my observations and Alan's statements are compared, looking at conflicts and coping strategies. Finally, Alan's practice is explained in the context of the indoor/outdoor dilemma.

Theoretical Framework

Argyris and Schön (1977) provide a useful framework for exploring the interactions of professional thought and action. They argue that all deliberate behaviour is governed by two kinds of thought propositions or theories-of-action: *Espoused theories* are the theories-of-action to which one gives allegiance and which upon request communicate to others—these are the thoughts that compromise self-image. *Theories-in-use*, on the other hand, are theories-of-action that govern action—these govern a person's public image and may or may not be compatible with espoused theories.

Argyris and Schön argue that theories-of-action—both espoused and in-use—are tools for maintaining certain kinds of constancy in the work world. And they go on to say that because professional practice is complex, when one constancy is sought, another is often diminished, a situation leading to conflict. I will use this device to articulate the source of conflict in the examination of outdoor teaching practice.

This kind of qualitative research that has grown out of the methodologies of the cultural anthropologist is relatively new in the field of experience-based education. Whereas sample size is the main issue on which the credibility of survey-style research hinges, the concept of sampling size (number of people involved) is not relevant because it is the depth and not the breadth of the investigation that generates quality in ethnographic research. Added to the battery of investigation techniques that might be applied to any educational problem, ethnographic research is a relatively new and potentially very powerful tool for helping practitioners, administrators and students understand why it is that experiential education, specifically in this case outdoor education, has endured—and, perhaps more importantly, why it has foundered in some settings.

A Case Study of Outdoor Teaching

Blue Sky Natural Science School where Alan Woods had taught for nine years is owned and operated by a public board of education. It has a non-teaching principal and a staff of six certified teachers who teach programs in a wooded agricultural setting to elementary students arriving by bus for half days and full days. According to school literature the basic aim of the facility is to "provide an extension of the classroom to the out-of-doors ... [through a] unique facility which cuts across all subject areas."

Alan was an open and honest person in his mid-thirties who went about his teaching with a wry sense of humour and an apparent affection for students. He spoke freely, candidly and with pride about his work at Blue Sky and made me feel welcome as an observer.

Of his many roles in the school—curriculum planner, equipment repairman, associate teacher to visiting student teachers, animal care technician—it was teaching that was most important to him. During morning chores or in conversations over coffee with other staff members, he was always shy and quiet, almost detached in his approach to the world. But when the bus arrived (he would often leave a cup of coffee steaming on the table and walk out the door many seconds before others would hear the sound of the motor), he became much more animated and outgoing.

As students stepped off the bus, Alan would begin with a string of questions to find out what kind of people he would be dealing with that day, how cooperative they were, and how much they knew about the topic of the day. He would walk backwards at the head of the line, questioning all the way to the lunchroom where classes were broken into groups and given a preview of the daily schedule and expected behaviour. From there, Alan would continue his energized interaction with students as they proceeded to the site of the day's lesson.

Lessons always began with questions about students' names, about their previous learning and about their ability to work together. The questioning style Alan used to gather information is best described in Hyman's taxonomy (1970) as recitation, characterized by students being asked to recite previously learned information. Recitation covers old ground as opposed to embarking on new. In Alan's case, recitation was based on information taught previously by the classroom teacher. He used recitation for controlling students (keeping their attention) and to get direct feedback from them. Information gleaned through recitation at the start of a class was often used again in later questions.

Lessons always had a name (i.e. Animal Nutrition) that was recorded on the pre-visit form; however, regardless of what the lesson name might imply about the lesson's content, *all* lessons had striking similarities. Recitation-style questioning was scattered throughout lessons. It was as if Alan didn't care all that much about the content of the lesson; just getting the students to appreciate the new setting and to work together seemed perhaps more important than learning any new information.

When Alan *did* want to teach students about a particular phenomenon, he switched to socratic questioning (Hyman, 1970). To Alan, socratic teaching had what he called a "pyramidal pattern" and involved working through a series of questions to get his students to tell him something that he wanted to hear. The pyramidal analogy made sense to him as a large series of simple questions that would lead to the formation of one concept.

Alan used recitation to sustain his students' interest and when they were keen he would switch to socratic questioning. If students were disinterested, his lessons featured recitation episodes almost exclusively. As long as students were prepared to ask questions about a topic, Alan seemed prepared to spend time talking about it. The range of topics at his command was impressive and, regardless of age, ability or grade, Alan had a knack of capturing and maintaining student interest. This professional charisma, if it might be called that, seemed a central element in his practice as a teacher.

It was rare for Alan's students to be left on their own for any length of time. Groups were usually together, with Alan at the front of the line leading the discussions.

Alan said that it was important that each child got the chance to answer at least one question. He said that it gave the students a feeling of success. It was as if the act of answering was more important than the actual answers.

More important for Alan than having students answer questions was allowing them to feel the animals. Talking about his work, he used the word "feel" very often. It wasn't enough for students to look or to smell the stock; they had to take time to touch the animals. For example, Alan encouraged them to think about the temperature of the animal, the texture of its skin, and so on.

When the time came for students to board the return bus, Alan rarely made remarks about what they had done during their time at school. Whatever it was that he wanted his students to get from a day at Blue Sky, he did not seem to think it needed reinforcing at the end of the session with talk.

When the bus had gone, Alan and his partner retired to the administration building lunchroom and, over soft drinks, swapped stories about the day. If pre-visits to schools were scheduled, this session would be cut short and one or both of them would rush into town, leaving others to do the chores. On days when there was no pre-visiting, Alan did a few evening chores, checked the next day's booking in the pre-visit binder, and went home between 3:30 and 4:00 o'clock.

Alan Talks About His Work

The preceding description gives a sketch of Alan's work day. During the study, he spoke at length about the work he does. Excerpts from those conversations follow.

"Getting Psyched"

The time Alan and his partner spent doing chores around the farm at the beginning of the day was a time that they needed to plan the day's logistics. They would talk about who was doing what and when to make sure that their groups would not conflict. But in addition to this time for organization Alan felt he needed a few minutes before the busses arrived to get energized for the day. He was adamant about the need for this:

> If I'm going to teach at that high energy level every day, then I really need to sit down for those 15 minutes. I can't do it unless I sort of sit down there with my morning coffee or just sit there and block everything out. And when the kids come, hey! I'm psyched up to go out and do it.

This type of high energy teaching took its toll on Alan; still, it was important that he present himself to students and visitors as an energized character. He was concerned that I know his five teaching hours were taxing, as if he somehow had to justify what it was that he did for a living:

> It's very, very hard some days to be up. You could be in the classroom and maybe you could be up two out of five days and still do a bang-up job—and carry through for the other three. That's not the way it is here.

"Their Best Possible Day"

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There was a sense of urgency when Alan spoke about what he was trying to accomplish in his work. Many comments about this aspect of his work can be summed up as follows:

> You only have the kids for a half day or a whole day, and it's their only visit to the school that year. My whole purpose for doing things is that they can do and see and learn as much as possible in the five hours that they're there. And so, when they get off the bus, you want to give them the best possible day.

It was apparent that a "best possible day" had more to do with developing feelings for animals and feelings for fellow students as people than it had to do with learning anything about cows or chickens or language or most of the other topics listed in the school curriculum outline. Here are some samples of what Alan had to say about this priority in his work:

> ...if the kids could pick up a hen, it would be far, far, far more important than [learning about] grading eggs. In this case I would be concentrating more on their emotional needs than their academic needs.

> I remember once coming back from the sale barn. All day long that group had been punching and kicking and shoving each other around. So, when we stopped at the school, I answered some of their questions. They were going on about why they did that [referring to the slaughter of animals]. And I said, "Look at yourselves as an example. I'm very, very happy that you feel that way because maybe many people don't feel strongly. But [how is it] when we go out and kick or punch each other? When it's another animal you have different feelings. Maybe you should translate some of your feelings for animals into feelings for other students." And there was silence, and they walked off the bus. I thought that hit pretty close to the truth. And even if that was <u>all</u> we accomplished through our trip to the sale barn, then it was a very, very worthwhile trip because I did point out something to them that they had never thought of before.

In achieving his teaching goals, Alan felt that there was little room for traditional ways of learning, like writing things down on paper:

> I'm not really much for carrying around pencils and papers. When you come to a centre like this it's kind of a waste of time to do that sort of thing. One example was a thing we had called a Language Trail where the kids would write down how they felt about feeling the corn or the animals. I have no doubt that the kids were learning and that the words were useful. To know what things feel like is important, but to have them stop and spell it and write it down, I felt, was a waste of time. I'm not always convinced that the children get their best possible day out of it.

"Getting to Know the Kids"

Because of time pressure, Alan felt the need to get to know students quickly to enable him to give them their "best possible day." Even if he happened to be working with his tenth second-grade class in a row, there were things he wanted to know about

their prior learning, emotional state, ability to cooperate and other aspects of character both of individuals and of the group that might affect their learning at the centre. Those first few minutes with any group were important ones. Alan talked about getting to know students this way:

> We try to figure out what kind of questions the kids are asking. It is very important to size up and feel out just what sort of level they're at and what they're interested in during the first 10 minutes you have them.

Establishing a picture in his mind of a group's character was done primarily at the beginning of a lesson, but general assessment of how students were relating to his teaching was ongoing. He said:

> If you can clue in on what they're like, what they know early enough, then you can sort of build on that and not make it a waste of time for them.

"The Importance of Flexibility"

Adapting his teaching to accommodate various groups was important. Alan felt that this flexibility—dealing with different students in different teaching situations—was one of the most important aspects of his job. Repertory grid techniques (Fransella & Bannister, 1977) helped Alan to talk about the need for flexibility in his work. I asked him to sort and arrange, as he saw fit, file cards each containing one descriptive vignette or element from his work. In speaking about his "most significant" group of elements he said:

> This is the first group I put together and the basic thing here was the fact that we have to be flexible and change with students ... for behavioural reasons, or for weather, or whatever. For example, we wouldn't do this cemetery study in the pouring rain, but in this case where we'd planned to do a pond study for two hours, I might just go out in the morning and scoop up four or five basins of pond water and work with the kids in the lunchroom.

Alan supervises a large number of student teachers in the course of any given year. His reports on their performance provided more clues about how he saw flexibility as a critical factor in successful outdoor teaching. Statements like these two relating to flexibility were found on nearly half of his student teacher evaluations:

> Student A: ... developed a good sense of timing for appropriate activities and displayed a degree of flexibility which is a necessary ingredient for a teacher.

> Student B: ... her pacing was excellent and she sensed the needs of her students. I was impressed with this flexibility.

"Questioning" also seemed to be an important element in Alan's teaching. Over three quarters of student teacher reports indicated the significance he placed on this aspect of outdoor teaching practice. Questioning was more than just a teaching tool, it was a way to control students, to find out about their backgrounds, and to assess how students were relating to his lessons. He did, however, make comments about socratic questioning. On student teacher reports he spoke of "a pyramid of information":

> He [the student] was able to build up a pyramid of information, keep the group interest level high, and allow maximum participation by his development of well-sequenced questions.

And, in conjunction with his emphasis on flexibility, Alan spoke about following student interests of the moment rather than following a sequential plan of his own. He said:

> If I'm teaching a lesson and someone asks a question off topic but related to our discussion, I feel that if a kid is interested enough to ask the question ... then I'll go ahead and ask a few more on the same topic.

Understanding Alan's Practice

As pointed out earlier, there is reason to think that cross purposes could exist in outdoor teaching. The following analysis of Alan Wood's practice shows that indeed such conflicts do exist.

First, we can look at what Alan said he wanted to do. He said that making the most of his short teaching time was important: "... my whole thing is to accomplish as much as possible while they're there for the five hours." He said he wanted to get to know his students: "It is very important to size up and feel out just what sort of level they're at ... during the first 10 minutes." He claimed he wanted to encourage thought: "... you have to allow time for children to think about it a little." And he agreed that he liked to have control over information flow in question-answer sessions: "... I try to think three or four minutes ahead, anticipating questions and asking questions so the thing is building up." He also acknowledged that he wanted to engender appreciation of animals: "I would rather ... just give them a chance to get a little respect for living things." And finally, he said that translating feelings for animals into feelings for human beings was important: [at the sale barn] "I said, 'So maybe you should translate your feelings for the animals into feelings for your fellow students.'"

Now we turn to Alan's practice and ask, "What does he do?" If his teaching were to be aligned with his espousals we would expect him to promote thought by giving attention to how students respond to probing questions about their experiences. And we might expect him to concentrate much of his energy on socratic teaching and discussion. What are the observations?

Alan teaches largely by recitation. Alan's questioning elicited single answers recalled from previously learned material. His questioning appeared to lack the pyramidal structure of "building" quality he espoused and which he took to be the way to promote the kind of thinking he desired. On the face of it, his use of recitation does not seem well aligned with his espoused purpose of getting the students to think critically, to build up ideas based on their experiences at the centre. As we shall see, however, recitation did allow him to pursue other goals which emerged from understanding his theories about the role of outdoor activities in developing enthusiasm for nature study and outdoor pursuits.

Recitation began when students got off the bus. Alan's typical lesson was to lead students from one location to the next, asking questions at each stop. He asked questions about their classroom work, their knowledge of farming, previous visits to the

centre and anything else that popped into his mind or originated in the minds of his students. The only pattern to the questioning was seemingly that it was without pattern. There was no doubt that students were interested and involved, but they were involved most often in recitation and not the socratic (building) questioning Alan told me he liked to use.

Hyman suggests that recitation causes "dependency on the teacher, rote learning and uncritical regurgitation of answers." It may be that Alan sought such dependency. Perhaps he valued the control that recitation gave him and the constant and immediate contact with students that this style of interaction guaranteed.

But why was there a difference between what Alan said and what he did, between the type of questioning he said he liked to use and the questioning method he actually employed in his practice?

Argyris and Schön provide a useful framework. Their suggestion is that teachers have theories-of-action, espoused and in-use, affecting the status of certain aspects of their work. As indicated earlier, these theories are used to keep governing variables within acceptable ranges. When attempts are made to maintain opposing variables, conflicts result. We might suspect that Alan's concentration on recitation is a result of his attempts to cope with ideas about teaching that are themselves contradictory or conflicting. However, before pursuing this idea, we must examine the context of Alan's teaching, the circumstances surrounding his practice.

The program outline from which Alan works reads like a formal science curriculum. For example, in a small frame building called the "Poultry Laboratory" (where Alan spent most of his time getting students to pick up hens—just to feel what it was like), the program outline suggests the following activities be done:

> Involves work with poultry and provides the children with the opportunity to come in contact with the living subject—provides an awareness of different metabolic rates—recording of data—estimation of bird and animal weights—basis for introducing basic graphing in the classroom.

Alan was expected to take students about whom he knew nearly nothing into activities like these.

The official school program outline asks him to address facts and figures of science in a systematic way, and somehow he had to interpret this expectation in a manner consistent with his wide variety of students (on any given day, the students might be mentally handicapped 18 year-olds or exceptionally bright first graders). As Alan said, he wanted to be flexible to the changing conditions of his work, but at some point he also had to pay attention to the official syllabus and address specific topics (i.e. Age study analysis of Leghorns)—topics not well served by recitation. With the realities of his work world on one side and with the exigencies of the school official outline on the other, there cannot help but be conflicts stemming from multiple and opposing demands in his teaching realm.

Conflicts in Practice

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Alan had a syllabus to teach but he lacked information about his students. The challenge here was to balance his responsibility to get to know his students with his professional obligation to teach lessons prescribed by the school program policy. If he favoured the prescribed lessons, he would not be able to gain much information about his students. Conversely, if he spent time assessing students, it would be difficult to cover the lesson topics. The five hours he had with most groups only exacerbated this conflict, creating pressure to use every second to the fullest, to give the students "their best possible time."

A second conflict in Alan's practice pitted cognitive outcomes of his teaching with affective ones. Recalling the sale barn outing when he was so pleased that students saw error in their bickering ways, the official program description of the educational possibilities at the sale barn seems at odds with what actually went on. This document states the following:

> Sale Barn: Identification of breeds, recording of weight and price per pound when sold, calculating the total cost, buying calves record places, names on trucks, and study local geography.

What Alan valued about his memorable trip to the sale barn had nothing to do with the official objectives of the outing. Within this example lies a conflict among the factually-oriented program outline, his desire to pursue social and affective outcomes of learning to which his teaching environment was so well suited, and his need to maintain control and student interest.

As Alan said, "So maybe what I'm doing is more along the lines of positive encouragement or positive reinforcement." Through recitation he was able to encourage and reinforce good behaviour, and this behaviour, it would seem, was important to him to ensure that students had their best possible day at Blue Sky.

Periodically, Alan used socratic questioning to pursue student ideas, but in doing this he felt he was risking control as he concentrated on one or two students. He was very conscious of dangers to unruly students near the animals, so he reverted to recitation to draw the group back to him. But there remained a desire to ask questions that would engage students in a consideration of the significance of what they were experiencing with him at Blue Sky School—in short, to pursue his interest in promoting their understanding of the subject. Nevertheless, circumstances dictated most often that he use recitation to capture the interest and attention of whole groups.

At this point it could be argued that recitation was a teaching strategy more aligned with Alan's goals of promoting feelings and general awareness. This goal, rather than promoting critical thought and understanding, may be at the very core of his theories-in-use; it may explain why he acted in a manner inconsistent with his espousals. Knowing this, we are better placed to understand his espoused theories, to weigh what he says he does, and to appreciate the conflicts in his practice.

Coping with Conflicts

There is little doubt that Alan tried to pursue simultaneously a number of goals at odds with each other. It was his job to cover the syllabus, but he felt the need to get

to know his students and to engender in them an appreciation for themselves and for the natural world. How did he cope?

Alan tried to get to know students quickly, and did so at the expense of lesson content until he has some idea about the nature of a new group. When a new group arrived, recitation was simply a way to find out about students he was meeting for the first time.

When students asked the right questions, Alan could switch to socratic questioning momentarily to satisfy his desire to cover the topics in the syllabus, but he could only do so when the group allowed. If a group was unruly or if the situation did not lend itself to this kind of questioning it was, by necessity, left out of the day's teaching.

Finally, Alan's inclination was to use his energy to bridge the gap between his desire to be a teacher concentrating on the facts and figures of science and an interpreter tending to more affective outcomes and being opportunistic about content delivery. Through energy and concentration he was able to give students what he thought to be their best possible day. Alan's energy brought life to recitation and gave the students an example of productive curiosity.

An analogy will illustrate Alan's conception of the role of energy in his work and how he used this to balance conflicts. If we think of his conflicts—"the facts" versus "feeling" polarity, for example—as reversible chemical equations, it was Alan's energized personality that allowed him to drive the reaction to his advantage. Sometimes he would favour feelings, sometimes he would favour facts, and sometimes he maintained equal amounts of both. The important aspect of this conception of his work is that Alan was always a balancer: he had to be able to recognize which blend of facts or feelings would give a particular group their best possible day.

By thinking about Alan's practice as a balancing act, reconciling conflicts, we can move beyond the gap between what he says and what he does and begin to understand that outdoor teaching practice is a complex business. At times Alan used teaching methods to promote critical thinking, but most often he simply tried to engender enthusiasm and feeling in his students. But it was not simply that he did one or the other, or desired to do one or the other. Each way of operating created for him conflicts which he resolved as best he could.

The Indoor/Outdoor Dilemma

Gaps between espoused theories and actual practice, and the conflicts within Alan's practice as outlined in this account point to an underlying dilemma at the heart of Outdoor Education. Conflicts and incongruities appear to reflect two opposing views of Outdoor Education. There is an *indoor view* found, for example, in school policies that hold Outdoor Education to be like all other types of schooling, that its methods and teaching strategies and content should be like classroom methods and teaching strategies, and that affective, emotional and social outcomes of learning should not be the main goals of public schooling. Rather, there should be emphasis on covering content.

On the other hand, Alan appears in practice to accept what might be called an *outdoor view*. This view says that Outdoor Education is *not* like other school subjects, that it provides experiences with special attributes and demands of their own, that Outdoor Education so conceived should be an integral—yet distinct—part of public education, and that there is no need for Outdoor Education practitioners to feel they have to justify what they do in terms of an indoor view.

Alan's conflicts, and those of the other informants in this study, appear to be manifestations of this underlying dilemma. The situation becomes a dilemma for practitioners like Alan when they are drawn to both views and try to operate in relation to both. Alan was concerned about giving students their best possible day and also in doing what he thought he ought to do in relation to the school program outline. The construct of an indoor/outdoor dilemma is, in a condensed way, what seems to underlie the conflicts in Alan's practice.

A manifestation of this dilemma was apparent in the hats worn by teachers at Blue Sky School. Some of them read "Blue Sky Outdoor Education Centre", and others—with an identical crest design printed at a different time—read "Blue Sky Natural Science School." After nearly two years of observation, it was clear to me that "Outdoor Education" and "Natural Science" were not necessarily the same thing. "Natural Science" was a politically popular notion that described the "indoor" view—the idea that the centre was there to teach content that would complement the classroom curriculum. "Outdoor Education", conversely, described the "outdoor" view of what was going on at Blue Sky—the idea that social and awareness educational goals were important. One has to wonder how much energy, which might be put into enriching the lives of students who visit the school, is taken up with insidious struggles between these opposing viewpoints.

Conflict between an outdoor practitioner's thoughts and actions is a problem to which the solution lies in the explication and understanding of the indoor/outdoor dilemma. Practitioners need to understand the conflicts built into their work. But, to the extent that Alan Wood represents his colleagues in the field, thoughtful practitioners do marvellous work under confusing and often difficult circumstances. The most effective path of resolution for this dilemma is to bring Outdoor Education decision makers, administrators and clients to a more realistic understanding of just what goes on when students get off the bus at an Outdoor Education Centre. For this to happen, however, practitioners will have to clarify in their own minds what it is that they do and what it is that best works with students in their special outdoor context. From that will come an understanding of the value of Outdoor Education in the broad social context of all schools—specifically what it is good for and who it can best serve. These practitioners could then endeavour to explain with conviction just what is is that Outdoor Education can add to the whole educational process.

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